



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

2025 Jain Conference

October 10-11, 2025

Department of Philosophy
Florida Atlantic University

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

777 Glades Road, Boca Raton, Florida U.S.A.

WELCOME

Dear Participants,

Welcome to the 2025 Jain Philosophy Conference. This conference is made possible by the generous support of the Florida Atlantic University Department of Philosophy and by the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts & Letters.

We would also like to thank Mrs. Simone White, Administrative Assistant of the Department of Philosophy, for all her work in helping us organize this conference. We hope you will enjoy both the presentations and the beauty of Boca Raton and South Florida.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

DATES

October 10-11, 2025

VENUE

Social Science Building (SO) 112
Florida Atlantic University
777 Glades Road
Boca Raton, Florida - U.S.A.

CONFERENCE RECEPTION

The conference reception will be on October 10 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. and will be organized on the Atrium (3rd floor) of the Culture and Arts (CU) building of Florida Atlantic University.

COFFEE BREAKS AND REFRESHMENTS

All coffee breaks and refreshments will be organized in Social Science (SO) 112, which is the conference venue.

Kindly consult the conference program for the times of the coffee breaks and lunches.

LECTURES

All lectures and presentations will be held in the Social Science (SO) building, Room 112. Wireless internet connection will be available to all participants.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

OCTOBER 10-11, 2025

SOCIAL SCIENCE BUILDING (SO) 112

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

12:30-1:00 P.M. - **LIGHT REFRESHMENTS**
(SO 112)

1:00-1:40 P.M. - **ALEKSANDRA (SASHA) RESTIFO**
FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY
“PHILOSOPHY EMBELLISHED: AESTHETIC STRATEGIES IN AMṚTACANDRA’S COMMENTARY”

1:50-2:30 P.M. - **JONATHAN DICKSTEIN**
ARIHANTA INSTITUTE / CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
“MORE LIMITS IN JAIN ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS”

2:40-3:20 P.M. - **ERIC GUREVITCH**
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
“EVERYDAY EPISTEMICS: THINKING ABOUT NATURAL KINDS, PERCEPTION, AND ORDINARY LANGUAGE ACROSS PHILOSOPHIC TRADITIONS”

3:30-4:10 P.M. - **ANA BAJŽELJ**
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE
“SELF AND MATTER: JAIN NON-ONE-SIDED DUALISM”

4:20-5:00 P.M. - **ANUBHAV JAIN**
SOAS UNIVERSITY LONDON
“NOTION OF SOUL, NON-SOUL, AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP IN KUNDAKUNDA PHILOSOPHY”

5:00-7:00 P.M. - **RECEPTION (MUSIC/DANCE, FOOD & BEVERAGES)**
MUSIC AND DANCE BY THE ASSOCIATION OF PERFORMING ARTS INDIA (APAI)

- *DANCE ON LORD GANESH*
- *THE NAVKAR MANTRA (OR NAMOKAR MANTRA)*
- *MAITRI BHAVANU PAVITRA ZAMU*

LOCATION: CULTURE AND ARTS (CU) ATRIUM
3rd FLOOR

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11

8:30-9:00 A.M. – **LIGHT REFRESHMENTS**
(SO 112)

9:00-9:40 A.M. – **CHRIS RAHLWES**
SMITH COLLEGE
“THE LIMITS OF ANEKĀNTAVĀDA”

9:50-10:30 A.M. – **ALBA RODRIGUEZ JUAN**
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE
“YAŚOVIJAYA’S REINTERPRETATION OF PATAÑJALI’S YOGA PHILOSOPHY”

10:40-11:20 A.M. – **NILS SEILER**
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
“UMĀSVĀTI ON KNOWLEDGE AND ITS SOURCE”

11:30-12:10 P.M. – **JINESH R. SHETH**
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM
“ON THE METHOD OF ANEKĀNTAVĀDA AND ITS THERAPEUTIC PARADIGM”

12:10-1:30 P.M. – **LUNCH BREAK**

1:30-2:10 P.M. – **EMMA IRWIN HERZOG**
CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY
“JAINA METHODS FOR TALKING ABOUT INEFFABLE THINGS”

2:20-3:00 P.M. – **RAJA ROSENHAGEN**
FRESNO STATE UNIVERSITY
“THE JAIN DOCTRINE OF NAYAVĀDA: A PERSPECTIVALIST READING”

3:10-3:50 P.M. – **DHRUV RAJ NAGAR**
EMORY UNIVERSITY
“TURNING THE JAINA WHEEL: THE INTRICATE PHILOSOPHICAL FRACTAL OF MALLAVĀDIN”

4:00-4:40 P.M. – **COGEN BOHANEC**
ARIHANTA INSTITUTE / CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
“LINGUISTIC ONTOLOGIES IN JAIN THOUGHT: INSIGHTS FROM ĀCĀRYA SUSHIL KUMAR”

CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

1:00-1:40 P.M. – **ALEKSANDRA (SASHA) RESTIFO**

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

“PHILOSOPHY EMBELLISHED: AESTHETIC STRATEGIES IN AMṚTACANDRA’S COMMENTARY”

The paper focuses on the *Ātmakhyāti* and *Kalaśas*, Amṛtacandra’s commentary on Kundakunda’s *Samayasāra*. By translating philosophical concepts into aesthetic categories and framing his commentary as a play, Amṛtacandra invites the audience to engage with the philosophical ideas as they would with drama: through feeling and experience. Amṛtacandra explains Kundakunda’s philosophy by drawing on the teleological nature of drama, whose goal is to evoke an aesthetic experience of *rasa* in the audience. While the soul must learn to experience the true aesthetic pleasure (*paramānanda*) that is pure knowledge (*vijñānaika rasaḥ*), it first engages in the drama of life, undergoing a process of identification with various states and emotions, akin to the way in which actors and spectators identify with the states and emotions of characters in a play. Amṛtacandra explains that the transient emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāvas*) lead the soul astray while the stable emotion (*sthāyi-bhāva*) of knowledge brings about peace (*śānti*) and wondrous joy (*camatkāra*). The soul’s savoring (*svadamānam*) of true knowledge (*jñānam ekam*) elevates it to the state of self-realization (*ātma-khyāti*). By presenting knowledge as the aesthetic experience of the highest truth (*paramārtha-rasatayā*) and eliminating distinctions between the emotion of knowledge and the self as spectator or actor, Amṛtacandra illustrates the dissolution of limited cognition that is bound to the duality of *saṃsāra*. I argue that Amṛtacandra’s use of aesthetic vocabulary provides a familiar framework for him to explain the meaning of Kundakunda’s notion of the pure self—the state of complete self-absorption, free from agency—that transcends duality (*dvaitam*) and perspectivism (*savva-ṇaya-pakkha-rahido*).

1:50-2:30 P.M. – **JONATHAN DICKSTEIN**

ARIHANTA INSTITUTE / CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

“MORE LIMITS IN JAIN ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS”

This talk juxtaposes Jainism’s sentiocentric environmental ethics with modernist perspectives that doubt the sentience of some organisms in the traditional Jain taxonomy. The talk aims to: (1) demonstrate how the Jain sentiocentric system endures as a strong position in contemporary animal and environmental ethics; (2) constructively critique Jain assertions of sentience in microbes, plants, and possibly some animals; (3) ask if insentient organisms could still qualify as having inherent worth according to an alternative standard than sentience, and what this question might mean for a modernist reconsideration of Jain environmental ethics

2:40-3:20 P.M. - **ERIC GUREVITCH**

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

“EVERYDAY EPISTEMICS: THINKING ABOUT NATURAL KINDS, PERCEPTION, AND ORDINARY LANGUAGE ACROSS PHILOSOPHIC TRADITIONS”

In this presentation, I explore the place of philosophy in the world and the place of the world in philosophy. More particularly, the presentation investigates how Jain philosophers were embedded in the political structures of medieval India and the role that everyday life played in their philosophy. In their Sanskrit writings, the Anantavīrya, Vādirāja, and Prabhācandra made forceful arguments about the physiology of vision, the epistemology of caste, and the question of ordinary language. At times, these arguments followed earlier Sanskrit precedents, but these philosophers often came to startling conclusions about both the nature of philosophy and the nature of the world.

3:30-4:10 P.M. - **ANA BAJŽELJ**

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

“SELF AND MATTER: JAIN NON-ONE-SIDED DUALISM”

This paper examines the relationship between the self and matter as presented in Pūjyapāda’s and Akalaṅka’s commentaries on the *Tattvārthasūtra*. It challenges the common understanding that Jain philosophers support a form of radical dualism between the self and matter by analyzing a complex discussion in these texts about the ability of karmic matter to not only influence the self but also characterize it as material. Pūjyapāda and Akalaṅka assert that the nature of the self is both immaterial and material when impacted by karmic matter, and this paper argues that the dualism between the self and matter that they propose is non-one-sided rather than radical.

4:20-5:00 P.M. - **ANUBHAV JAIN**

SOAS UNIVERSITY LONDON

“NOTION OF SOUL, NON-SOUL, AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP IN KUNDAKUNDA PHILOSOPHY”

Does anyone truly understand what the soul is? Metaphysics and ontology address this question seriously, so this paper attempts to explore it through the lens of Kundakunda. Recent scholarship in Jaina metaphysics has highlighted tension in the soul-non-soul relationship, but Kundakunda’s approach is yet to be fully mapped. This paper investigates how Kundakunda explores the soul’s identity and its interaction with non-soul within the pentad (*astikāya*), hexad (*dravya*), heptad (*tattva*), and ennead categories (*padārtha*). To trace conceptual shifts, the method of this paper is inspired by K. Brun’s sectional studies, which incorporate scattered content across Kundakunda’s texts on the proposed problem. I demonstrate that although the soul is common in all these categories, they serve a distinct ontological purpose, where the pentad and hexad categories establish the soul’s place in what exists; however, the heptad and ennead frameworks answer the question of why the soul suffers, thus serving a distinct ontological purpose.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11

9:00-9:40 A.M. – **CHRIS RAHLWES**

SMITH COLLEGE

“THE LIMITS OF ANEKĀNTAVĀDA”

Classical Jainism presents *Anekāntavāda* (the Doctrine of Non-One-Sidedness) as a perspectival epistemic method. Per this doctrine, truth is understood as non-one-sided, and single perspectives can only capture partial “truths.” By synthesizing opposing perspectives, one approaches a more veridical “truth.” While this account is described as inherently tolerant of differing views, it remains limited within Jain epistemology. That is, the perspectival approach can only be applied to sensory knowledge and testimony, leaving out other (more direct) means of attaining knowledge and truth. Addressing these limitations raises ethical and metaphysical considerations for contemporary understandings of *Anekāntavāda*.

9:50-10:30 A.M. – **ALBA RODRIGUEZ JUAN**

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

“YAŚOVIJAYA’S REINTERPRETATION OF PATAÑJALI’S YOGA PHILOSOPHY”

Although Patañjali’s *Yoga-sūtra* holds a prominent place in modern discourse as the earliest known compendium of yoga teachings, historical engagements with it have been far more varied than usually acknowledged. Scholarly attention has largely focused on Hindu traditions, often overlooking voices that might complicate the history of the text. This paper examines an underexplored Jain response to Patañjali by the 17th-century Tapā Gaccha monk Yaśovijaya (1624–1688), often called the “last great philosopher of Jainism.” In his Sanskrit work *Thirty-Two [Chapters] with Thirty-Two [Verses]* (*Dvātriṃśad-dvātriṃśikā*), Yaśovijaya devotes an entire chapter to Patañjali, treating him as his central interlocutor.

Yaśovijaya challenges the foundations of Patañjali’s yoga system, particularly the idea that the self (*puruṣa*) is unchanging and that all else – including nature, body, and mind (*prakṛti*) – is universal. These ideas, he argues, conflict with the Jain doctrines of karmic individuality and non-one-sidedness (*anekāntavāda*). He also critiques Patañjali’s definition of yoga as the cessation of the movements of the mind, arguing that it is too narrow. For Yaśovijaya, yoga entails a broader process of bodily, verbal, and cognitive purification aimed at the elimination of karma, the key to liberation in the Jain tradition.

This paper argues that Yaśovijaya’s detailed discussion of Patañjali’s metaphysics is neither a passive reception nor a simplistic rejection. Rather, it represents a constructive, layered, and philosophically rigorous response. While acknowledging aspects of the *Yoga-sūtra*, Yaśovijaya reinterprets them through a distinctly Jain framework, articulating an alternative vision of yoga philosophy. His work offers evidence of intellectual engagement with Patañjali in early modern South Asia. Moreover, it continued to serve as a reference point for later thinkers, and is still studied among Jains today.

10:40-11:20 A.M. – **NILS SEILER**

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

“UMĀSVĀTI ON KNOWLEDGE AND ITS SOURCE”

In my presentation, I provide an historical and epistemological analysis of the 5th century text Commentary on Lines on Reality (*Tattvārthasūtrabhāṣya* (TSBh)) by the Jain Monk Umāsvāti. I argue that by placing the TSBh within the shifting terrain of classical Indian epistemology we can uncover the philosophical pressures that produced the move from intuitive and untheorized notions of epistemic justification to debates regarding the fallibility of justification. Through the use of TSBh, and close readings of other early discussions of Indian epistemology, I show how concerns regarding the relationship between knowledge and justification culminate in the widely held view that epistemic justification is infallible in nature.

11:30-12:10 P.M. – **JINESH R. SHETH**

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

“ON THE METHOD OF *ANEKĀNTAVĀDA* AND ITS THERAPEUTIC PARADIGM”

Even though numerous studies have taken place, *anekāntavāda* (non-one-sidedness), a central theory in Jaina philosophy, continues to receive renewed attention, this time as an attempt to investigate its therapeutic value. Given its inclusive approach that reconciliates the opposing views, which often resembles as if it solves a philosophical—to be precise, metaphysical—problem, one may ask, does *anekāntavāda* have a therapeutic value? If so, what does it mean to say that it is therapeutic? Which diseases does it cure, if any? How does it proceed in its endeavour? Who can effect such a therapeutic transformation? Can the therapy go wrong? These are some of the questions that this paper is motivated by. While my primary aim in this paper is to argue for the therapeutic project that is embedded in *anekāntavāda*—in the sense that it can serve as a medicine to cure the ills of absolutism (*ekāntavāda*), thereby resulting in a state of equanimity (*samatā*)—it would be much more effective if I first substantiate the claims that (a) *anekāntavāda* embodies a philosophical method and that (b) it can be applied to problems of philosophy that are not restricted to metaphysics alone. The need for this long detour—the first half of the paper—will become evident in the course of the paper. The paper takes a textual-philosophical approach that is based on a wide-range of Jain philosophical texts, and particularly Samantabhadra’s *Āptanīmāṃsā* (Examination of an Authority).

1:30-2:10 P.M. – **EMMA IRWIN HERZOG**

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

“JAINA METHODS FOR TALKING ABOUT INEFFABLE THINGS”

Here I engage the Jaina sevenfold formula (*sapta-bhaṅgī*) as a linguistic model for talking about ineffable things. To assert of some phenomenon that it is ineffable involves practical contradiction—the assertion itself demonstrates that the phenomenon is not ineffable. I argue that an indefinite series of qualified statements modeled on the Jaina *sapta-bhaṅgī* avoids contradiction and evinces a thing’s ineffability in a way that no single, unqualified statement could. This study has epistemic implications beyond the semantics of ineffability, i.e., perhaps the best way to know something that escapes linguistic capture is not to remain silent about it.

2:20-3:00 P.M. - **RAJA ROSENHAGEN**

FRESNO STATE UNIVERSITY

“THE JAIN DOCTRINE OF NAYAVĀDA: A PERSPECTIVALIST READING”

In this talk, I develop a perspectivalist interpretation of *nayavāda*, one of the Jain doctrines of relativity. It treats *nayavāda* as an epistemological corollary to *anekāntavāda* (non-one-sidedness) and a foundation for understanding *syādvāda* as a doctrine of conditional assertibility. The proposed reading offers a fresh approach to epistemic progress, moving beyond the familiar parable of the blind men and the elephant. Finally, the talk reflects on how this interpretation situates epistemic inquiry within the broader soteriological aims of the Jain Dharma tradition.

3:10-3:50 P.M. - **DHRUV RAJ NAGAR**

EMORY UNIVERSITY

“TURNING THE JAINA WHEEL: THE INTRICATE PHILOSOPHICAL FRACTAL OF MALLAVĀDIN”

Mallavādin Kṣamāśramaṇa's formidable *Dvādaśāranayacakra* and its commentary *Nyāyāgamānusāriṇī* by Siṃhasūri (reconstructed by Munī Jambūvijaya). Mallavādin appears to be working with at least four distinct conceptual schemes operative simultaneously in the text: a new twelve-fold *naya* framework, an assessment and critique of a number of extant philosophical positions of his time, perhaps the first of its kind, a logico-grammatical scheme of *vidhi* (affirmation) and *niyama* (restriction) according to which all *nayas* (standpoints/ perspectives) and philosophical views are arranged, and a grammatical analysis of word- and sentence-meaning related to Bhartr̥hari and more generally Sanskritic philosophy of language. The scheme of *vidhi* and *niyama* is expansive, a meta-framework simultaneously operative upon philosophical, grammatical, doxographic and text-critical data, and I discuss its ingenious application to various topics. I further discuss how the central textual metaphor of the wheel (*cakra*) illumines these classificatory schemes, and how this work may differ from subsequent Jaina doxographic activity.

4:00-4:40 P.M. - **COGEN BOHANEK**

ARIHANTA INSTITUTE / CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

“LINGUISTIC ONTOLOGIES IN JAIN THOUGHT: INSIGHTS FROM ĀCĀRYA SUSHIL KUMAR”

This presentation examines Ācārya Sushil Kumar's discourses on Jain philosophy of language and mantra, comparing it with South Asian traditions like varṇa-vāda and sphaṭa-vāda, alongside modern academic perspectives. Kumār integrates concepts from Hindu linguistic theories within a Jain framework, analyzing metaphysical assumptions across dharmic philosophies. He contrasts Jain views on mantra efficacy with Hindu approaches, emphasizing transformation through practitioner consciousness rather than inherent linguistic properties. This study places his insights within broader philosophical discussions on language, meaning, and reality, highlighting Jain contributions to these dialogues.

